



DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Washington, D.C. 20520

October 22, 1981

SECRET/SENSITIVE
MEMORANDUM

TO: EA - Amb. Holdridge

THROUGH: EA - Mr. O'Donohue

FROM: EA/VLK - L. Desaix Anderson

SUBJECT: Congressional Interest in Humanitarian Gesture to Laos-
 An Update

In the attached two cables from Embassy Vientiane, Charge Moser reports with that with one possible exception he has been unable to identify any disaster areas in Laos at the present time. The exception is the appalling state of Vientiane's main hospital, where patients are in danger of dying for want of basic supplies, equipment and medicines.

AID/OFDA states a precedent exists for disaster assistance for situations like that found in the Lao hospital but has asked Bill Thomas to provide additional information on the situation within two to three weeks. With that in hand, AID/OFDA and I believe we can move ahead with disaster assistance to the Lao.

AID/OFDA also recommends Bill Thomas look into a program of disaster preparedness for Laos. This may be a possible avenue of approach over the longer term and I have asked Bill to see what can be done, but it does not appear a viable way to satisfy our desire to make an immediate gesture to the Lao. They may view our suggestion as an unwanted and unnecessary intrusion into their affairs.

Should the above approaches not pan out, I see little hope for success for any other alternative except the employment of covert CIA funding to finance the sort of friendly humanitarian gesture envisioned.

In a conversation with me last Monday, Congressman LeBoutillier praised the Department for "doing a good job." He is nevertheless very interested in making an early move.

As you will see from the attached document, Section 132b of an amendment to the Foreign Assistance Act states, "The President shall... take all possible steps to obtain a final accounting of all American MIAs in Vietnam." The Legal Adviser's office believes Congress intended this section to apply to all Indochina and is now examining the

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XDS-3 10/22/81 (Anderson, L. Desaix)

State Dept. review completed

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legislative history of this amendment for confirmation. We may want subsequently to enlist the support of Congressman LeBoutillier and others in changing the wording of the amendment to include specific mention of Laos.

RCF
EA/VLK:RCPorter:jy

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Department of State

INCOMING
TELEGRAMPAGE 01
ACTION SS-30

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VIENTI 00971 170552Z

INFO OCT-02 ADS-00 SSO-00 /032 W
-----006014 170555Z /16O 170510Z OCT 81
FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2060

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENTIANE 0971

EXDIS

FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY HOLDRIDGE FROM MOSER

E.O. 12065: XDS-1 10/17/01 (MOSER, LEO J.) OR-M
TAGS: SWEL, PEPR, LA, US
SUBJ: FOREIGN DISASTER RELIEF: HEALTH IN LAOS

REF: (A) VIENTIANE 0963; (B) STATE 273203

1. (C-ENTIRE TEXT)

2. UNDP, UNICEF, AND WORLD BANK RESREPS AND OTHER EMBASSIES THAT WE HAVE CONSULTED REPORT THAT LAO GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS HAVE NOT RAISED WITH THEM EXTRAORDINARY EMERGENCY CONDITIONS RESULTING FROM FLOODING. IN ONE CASE WE HAVE HEARD THAT HIGH-RANKING AGRICULTURAL OFFICIALS DECLINED POSSIBLE EMERGENCY AID FROM UNDP, STATING "WE CAN HANDLE THIS ONE OURSELVES." FINANCE MINISTER NOUHAH PHOUMSAVAN REPORTEDLY TOLD SWEDISH CHARGE RECENTLY THAT LPDR LEADERS DID NOT NOW REGARD FLOODING AS OF DISASTER PROPORTIONS.

3. OUR CONSULTATIONS WITH FOREIGN HEALTH EXPERTS AND LAO MEDICAL PERSONNEL AT VIENTIANE HAVE NOT IDENTIFIED ANY DISASTER AREAS IN LAOS AT THE PRESENT TIME. HUMAN DISEASES, INCLUDING MALARIA AND DYSENTERY ARE PREVALENT, BUT WE HAVE NO FIRM EVIDENCE THAT THEY ARE PARTICULARLY GREATER THAN USUAL. A POSSIBLE EXCEPTION IS LIVER DISEASES (SEE BELOW). FAO REPORTS THAT THERE REMAINS A CHRONIC INCIDENCE OF HOOF-AND-MOUTH AND CHOLERA, BUT THAT OTHERWISE LIVESTOCK HEALTH CONDITIONS IN LAOS ARE ACCEPTABLE, TO THE BEST OF THEIR INFORMATION. FAO IN FACT ANTICIPATES SUCCESS AGAINST THESE DISEASES EMANATING FROM ITS INOCULATION PROGRAMS (PARTICULARLY IN SOUTHERN LAOS). DISEASES REFERRED TO IN PARA 2, REF B, ARE ACTUALLY TWO NAMES OF A SINGLE BACTERIAL ILLNESS WHICH OCCURS IN LIVESTOCK WITH THE ADVENT OF EACH RAINY SEASON. FAO REGARDS THIS CYCLICAL AILMENT AS NORMALLY CONTROLABLE, AND HAVE DECIDED ITS IMPACT TOO MINOR TO WARRANT PRODUCING VACCINE AGAINST IT.

4. OUR SURVEY OF MEDICAL CONDITIONS IN LAOS REVEALS, HOWEVER, THAT GENERAL CONDITIONS AT VIENTIANE'S CENTRAL HOSPITAL (MAHOSOT) REMAIN APPALLING, AND MAY BECOME WORSE. MAHOSOT TREATS APPROXIMATELY 100,000 PATIENTS PER YEAR. THE CHIEF RESIDENT FOREIGN PHYSICIAN DESCRIBES MANY NEEDS AS OF AN "EMERGENCY" OR "URGENT" IN NATURE. HE MENTIONED THAT IF A NEW ENDOSCOPE WERE NOT PROVIDED SOON, SOME PATIENTS NEEDING DIAGNOSIS AND BIOPSIES WOULD DIE. (HE STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS DEVICE IN TROPICAL AREAS, SUCH AS LAOS, WHERE GASTRO-INTESTINAL AILMENTS ARE PREVALENT.) HE LISTED AS OTHER IMMEDIATE NEEDS: (A) X-RAY FILMS; (B) DRUGS (CERTAIN ANTIBIOTICS, INSULIN, MEDICINES FOR LIVER DISORDERS AND OTHERS); (C) MINOR SURGICAL INSTRUMENTS; AND (D) A HOSPITAL LAUNDRY TO ENSURE SANITATION. WHEN THE STATE DEPARTMENT REGIONAL MEDICAL OFFICER WAS LAST IN VIENTIANE, HE DISCOVERED THAT MAHOSOT DID NOT EVEN HAVE AN I.V. CAPABILITY (OF GIVING PATIENTS INTRAVENOUS FLUIDS,

CRUCIAL TO PREVENT DEHYDRATION DEATHS IN DYSENTERY).

5. THE FOREIGN RESIDENT PHYSICIAN AT MAHOSOT EXPLAINED THAT THE HEALTH AFFLICTION WHICH APPEARED TO HKM TO BE ON THE RISE RECENTLY WAS LIVER DISEASES. HE SAID THAT HE HAD DETECTED AN UPSURGE IN HEPATITIS. (NO STATISTICS OF OCCURRENCE ARE AVAILABLE, HOWEVER, BECAUSE OF LACK OF MANPOWER, TRAINING AND THE RELUCTANCE OF MANY LAO TO REPORT TO MEDICAL PERSONNEL WHEN AFFLICTED.) HE ADDED THAT 80 PERCENT OF VIENTIANE RESIDENTS CURRENTLY SUFFER FROM LIVER FLUKES (OPISTHORCHIS SINENSIS); THAT LARGE AMOUNTS OF THE DRUG CLOXYL WERE NEEDED TO TREAT THE CONDITION. THE DOCTOR STATED THAT THERE IS A CONSTANT TURN-UP OF PEOPLE (PRIMARILY FROM THE COUNTRYSIDE) AFFLICTED WITH MALARIA BUT THAT HE HAS NOT SEEN ANY INCREASE IN THE DISEASE.

6. IN SUMMARY, AS A RESULT OF INFORMATION PROVIDED TO US SO FAR BY HEALTH EXPERTS HERE, WE ARE UNABLE TO DOCUMENT ANY CURRENT DRAMATIC "DISASTER" CONDITION THAT WOULD OBVIOUSLY QUALIFY UNDER AID/OFDA HANDBOOK, CHAPTER EIGHT. THE DECLINING STATE OF HEALTH CARE AT MAHOSOT MIGHT POSSIBLY FALL UNDER CRITERION "D", PARA 3B, CHAPTER THREE OF THE FOREIGN DISASTER ASSISTANCE HANDBOOK: "A SLOWLY DEVELOPING CATASTROPHE CAUSED BY NATURE OR MAN'S NEGLECT, OR BOTH, SUCH AS DROUGHT, FAMINE, EPIDEMIC." WE WOULD WELCOME THE DEPARTMENT'S EVALUATION ON THIS POSSIBILITY.

7. POST WILL CONTINUE TO BE ALERT TO NEW EVENTS IN LAOS THAT MIGHT CHANGE THE ABOVE ASSESSMENT.
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CONFIDENTIAL

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INCOMING
TELEGRAM

Department of State

PAGE 01 VIENTI 00963 160844Z
ACTION SS-30

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VIENTI 00963 160844Z

INFO OCT-02 ADS-00 SSO-00 /032 W
-----360656 160859Z /22O 160820Z OCT 81
FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2054

SECRET VIENTIANE 0963

EXDIS

FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY HOLDRIDGE FROM MOSER

E.O. 12065: XDS-1 10/16/01 (MOSER, LEO J.) OR-M
TAGS: SWEL, PEPR, MOPS, LA, US
SUBJECT: CONDITIONS IN LAOS

REF: STATE 273203

1. (S - ENTIRE TEXT)

2. MEDIA HERE HAS NOT RECENTLY CARRIED ANY MAJOR STORIES OF NEW FLOODING IN LAOS OR OF DISEASE IN AFTERMATH OF RECENT FLOODING DISASTERS. WE ARE CURRENTLY FOLLOWING THE SITUATION THROUGH UN AND OTHER CONTACTS HERE. THE ONLY NEW AND RATHER SPECIFIC REPORT WE HAVE OF DISEASE IN THE AFTERMATH OF FLOODING INVOLVES DYSENTERY-LIKE INFECTION CAUSING SIGNIFICANT LOSS OF HUMAN LIFE AROUND BAN PHONHONG, ABOUT 70 KILOMETERS NORTH OF VIENTIANE ON THE LUANG PRABANG ROAD.

3. DURING AN OCT 16 CONVERSATION WITH MFA DIRECTOR OF SECOND DEPARTMENT, PHEUIPHANH NGAOSIVATH, I LEARNED THAT DIRECTOR GENERAL SOUBANH IS NOT EXPECTED TO RETURN UNTIL OCT 31, THE VERY DAY I AM SCHEDULED TO DEPART VIENTIANE. I MENTIONED TO PHEUIPHANH THAT CONGRESSMEN HENDON AND LEBOUTILLIER HAD APPARENTLY HELD A SECOND CONVERSATION WITH SECRETARY GENERAL SOUBANH AT NEW YORK AND THAT THEY HAD DISCUSSED THE POSSIBILITY OF HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO LAOS. PERHAPS IN THE FORM OF MEDICINES TO VICTIMS OF RECENT FLOODS IN LAOS. PHEUIPHANH DID NOT REVEAL WHETHER HE WAS PRIVY TO THE FACT, OR SUBSTANCE, OF THIS CONVERSATION AT NEW YORK.

4. PHEUIPHANH STATED THAT HE WOULD BE CHECKING INTO SOUBANH'S CONVERSATION WITH CONGRESSMEN HENDON AND LEBOUTILLIER. HE MENTIONED THAT, OF COURSE, THE DANGERS OF THE RAINY SEASON WERE NOT YET OVER. (SOMEWHAT DRAMATICALLY, PART OF THE CONVERSATION WAS DIFFICULT TO HEAR BECAUSE OF THE DOWNPOUR OF RAIN OUTSIDE.)

5. EMBASSY IS STILL IN THE PROCESS OF ATTEMPTING TO ASSESS DISASTER CONDITIONS THAT MAY PREVAIL WITHIN LAOS. NONE ARE IMMEDIATELY APPARENT AT THE PRESENT TIME AT VIENTIANE. WHETHER IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE FOR ME OR A MEMBER OF MY STAFF TO TRAVEL DIRECTLY TO THE SITE OF DISASTER CONDITIONS ELSEWHERE WOULD PROBABLY DEPEND ON THE PARTICULAR AREA INVOLVED. SOME AREAS ARE RELATIVELY INACCESSIBLE. AT THOSE WHICH ARE DANGEROUS, THE LAO MIGHT BE HESITANT TO TRY TO SET UP A TRIP WITHOUT LABORIOUS PREPARATION. I DO NOT, HOWEVER, DISCOUNT THE POSSIBILITY THAT SUCH A FIRSTHAND VISIT TO A DISASTER AREA MIGHT BE MADE POSSIBLE, ASSUMING, OF COURSE, THAT THE LAO HAD APPROACHED US FOR HUMANITARIAN AID IN RESPECT TO THE AREA.

6. I BELIEVE IT IS QUITE LIKELY THAT THERE REMAIN LOCALIZED DISASTER CONDITIONS, OF SOME SEVERITY, IN ISOLATED POCKETS WITHIN LAOS. WHETHER ANY OF THESE WILL BE BROUGHT TO OUR ATTENTION, AND WITH SUFFICIENT DETAIL, MAY DEPEND ON WHAT INITIATIVE SOUBANH HIMSELF HAS TAKEN WITHIN HIS OWN GOVERNMENT AFTER MEETING WITH THE CONGRESSMEN. THIS IS DIFFICULT TO ESTIMATE AT THE PRESENT TIME. SOUBANH MAY HAVE COME OUT OF HIS MEETING WITH THE CONGRESSMEN THINKING THAT THERE WERE HUMANITARIAN NEEDS THAT THE LPDR SHOULD CONSIDER

RAISING WITH THE U.S. IN THAT CASE, I PRESUME THAT HE AND THE FOREIGN MINISTER SUBSEQUENTLY SENT THE MATTER TO THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE FOR DECISION. ONLY AFTER IT EMERGES FROM THAT LEVEL OF DECISION MAKING WOULD WE LIKELY HAVE ANY SIGNAL HERE. PRIME MINISTER KAYSONE HAS ONLY RECENTLY RETURNED FROM HIS ANNUAL TRIP TO THE SOVIET UNION AND EASTERN EUROPE.

7. DURING THE ABOVE MENTIONED CONVERSATION WITH PHEUIPHANH, WHICH COVERED A VARIETY OF SUBJECTS, I ALSO REMINDED HIM THAT WE ARE STILL AWAITING AN OFFICIAL RESPONSE FROM HIS GOVERNMENT ON THE ORDINANCE REMOVAL/CRASH SITE ACCESS PROPOSALS. HE STATED THAT HE REALIZED THAT THIS WAS THE CASE.

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SECRET

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e. International Development and Food Assistance Act of 1977

Partial text of Public Law 95-88 [H.R. 6714], 91 Stat. 533, approved August 3, 1977, as amended by Public Law 96-53 [International Development Cooperation Act of 1979; H.R. 3324], 93 Stat. 359 at 366, approved August 14, 1979; and by Public Law 96-465 [Foreign Service Act of 1980; H.R. 6790], 94 Stat. 2071 at 2160, approved October 17, 1980.

NOTE.—Except for the provisions noted below, the International Development and Food Assistance Act of 1977 consists of amendments to the FA Act of 1961 and the Agricultural Trade Development and Assistance Act of 1954 (Public Law 480). For texts, see pages 1 and 401.

AN ACT To amend the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 to authorize development assistance programs for fiscal year 1978, to amend the Agricultural Trade Development and Assistance Act of 1954 to make certain changes in the authorities of that Act, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SHORT TITLE

Section 1. This Act may be cited as the "International Development and Food Assistance Act of 1977."

TITLE I—INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE

* * * * *

INSPECTOR GENERAL, FOREIGN ASSISTANCE

Sec. 124. (a)(1) * * *

(2) * * * [Repealed—1981]

(b) Section 5315 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by repealing paragraphs (52) and (53).

(c) The amendments made by this section shall take effect on July 1, 1978.

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FUTURE UNITED STATES DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE

Sec. 131.² It is the sense of the Congress that the United States should increase substantially its assistance for self-help development among the world's poorest people. Such assistance should be provided in accordance with the general policies and principles of

¹ Paragraph (2), which concerned the duties and responsibilities of the Inspector General, Foreign Service, was repealed by Sec. 2205(11) of the Foreign Service Act of 1980 (Public Law 96-465; 94 Stat. 2162).

² 22 U.S.C. 2151 note.

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chapter 1 of part I of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, with particular emphasis on encouraging and supporting more equitable patterns of economic growth, especially in the poorest countries, and should be coordinated with similar expanded efforts by international organizations, donor nations, and the recipient countries themselves.

LIMITATION ON USE OF FUNDS; MISSING IN ACTION IN VIETNAM

Sec. 132.¹ (a) None of the funds authorized to be appropriated by this Act may be used for assistance to or reparations for the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, or Cuba.

(b) The President shall continue to take all possible steps to obtain a final accounting of all Americans missing in action in Vietnam.

PLAN FOR INCREASED MINORITY BUSINESS PARTICIPATION IN FOREIGN ASSISTANCE ACTIVITIES

Sec. 133.² (a) The Administrator of the agency primarily responsible for administering part I of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 shall prepare and transmit to the Congress, not later than 30 days after the date of enactment of this Act, a detailed plan for the establishment of a section on minority business within such agency.

(b) Such plan shall include, but shall not be limited to—

(1) a description of where the section on minority business will be located in such agency's organizational structure and what relevant lines of authority will be established;

(2) a listing of the specific responsibilities that will be assigned to the section on minority business to enable it to increase, in a rational and effective manner, participation of minority business enterprises in activities funded by such agency;

(3) a design for a time-phase system for bringing about expanded minority business enterprise participation, including specific recommendations for percentage allocations of contracts by such agency to minority business enterprises;

(4) a proposed reporting system that will permit objective measuring of the degree of participation of minority business enterprises in comparison to the total activities funded by such agency;

(5) a detailed projection of the administrative budgetary impact of the establishment of the section on minority business; and

(6) a detailed set of objective criteria upon which determinations will be made as to the qualifications of minority business enterprises to receive contracts funded by such agency.

(c)³ (1) Upon the enactment of the International Development Cooperation Act of 1979, the section on minority business established pursuant to subsection (a) shall be redesignated as the minority Resource Center (hereafter in this section referred to

³ Subsection (c) was added by Sec. 123 of the International Development Cooperation Act of 1979 (Public Law 96-53; 93 Stat. 366). This amendment made by Pub. Law 96-53, effective August 16, 1979.